

Santa Rosa County
Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Task Force
Steering Committee
November 16, 2005
Milton, Florida

The Santa Rosa County LMS Task Force met on the above date with 16 members present. A copy of the sign in sheet showing attendees is attached. Walker called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

Donna Adams moved approval of the minutes from the August 24, 2005 meeting; Tony Gomillion seconded, and the vote carried unanimously.

Updates on LMS Tier I-III submissions for Ivan

Sharon Marsh said she provided a list of updated projects submitted to FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). She said she spoke to a FEMA representative concerning the three projects that have a discrepancy in the amounts. Marsh said it appears FEMA deducted 25% from the project amounts even though they were not supposed to. She said FEMA will correct the error. Marsh said yesterday she received a list from FEMA indicating all Santa Rosa County projects are still under review. She said the list included all Florida counties and none of the Hurricane Ivan projects have been approved yet.

Gomillion asked the anticipated response time. Walker said it is his understanding FEMA is still addressing earlier storm events. He said none of Hurricane Ivan projects have been approved. D. Adams asked if the money for the program is in jeopardy.

Marsh said she felt FEMA is overwhelmed and discussed several reasons for the delay. She said some of the hardening projects are close to being approved.

Gomillion asked if any engineering work has been initiated on County or City projects. Marsh said those types of projects were submitted as two phase projects, and FEMA will be funding the engineering study and plans as well as the actual project.

Furman said it took four years to break ground with the Floridatown project using this type of funding. Marsh said this is not a quick solution. She said next year the submitted projects will be spread out instead of all being submitted at one time.

Gomillion asked D. Adams the progress of City projects. D. Adams said with the funds awarded for CDBG projects the city will move forward on the west side of town. Marsh requested information on any projects approved by FEMA.

Sheryl Bracewell said she has two projects that have been completed. She said Florida Highway Patrol donated radios completing Item #28, and a security system was obtained with the Homeland Security Grant completing Item #37.

Discussion of the updated draft Initiatives Proposal Form

Walker said the sub-committee designated last meeting has improved the application form. Marsh said the previous form was difficult to use, and the projects did not get scored accurately. She reviewed the changes to the Initiatives List Proposal & Assessment Form in detail. Marsh said the application can be downloaded from the county website for completion and e-mailed to her. Marsh said she will bring all submitted applications to the LMS meetings for the committee to prioritize the projects. She recommended using the improved form and said additional adjustments can be made as needed.

Gomillion asked how private homes are prioritized. Marsh said she explains to citizens the submission process and how projects are prioritized. She said she lets citizens know this is not a short term fix; it is a two to three year process. Marsh said she also tries to make it clear to citizens that their project will be competing with a lot of other projects that need to be completed.

Marsh reviewed the two grants available through FEMA.

1. Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant (PDM)

2. Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

She said the PDM grant focuses mainly on elevation projects. Marsh said in the future the county can be more aggressive applying for PDM grants. She said the county is currently collecting a pool of data for PDM grant submission. There was discussion concerning the inclusion of all projects on the priority list for rating of the projects and grant submission as funding sources are identified. Marsh said the LMS committee will refer to the priority list for projects that qualify for specific grants as the grants become available. She said the projects will not necessarily be completed as prioritized.

D. Adams moved approval to adopt the updated Initiatives List Proposal & Assessment Form; Royals seconded, and the vote carried unanimously.

Bracewell suggested adding "This form can not be used for reimbursement of mitigation projects" to the initiatives form. Marsh agreed.

Discussion of the updated draft of By-Law changes and Steering Committee composition

Marsh reviewed the amendments in detail. She said there has been discussion regarding expanding the Steering Committee to include additional entity representation. Royals said she felt a person from the private sector should be on the Steering Committee. Marsh recommended representation from at least one of the Chambers of Commerce and the Historical Society. There was discussion with regard to these representatives. M. Adams suggested asking each of the Chambers of Commerce if they would be willing to designate an LMS representative on a rotating basis. He said each year there would be a chamber representative from a different area of the county. Marsh requested the LMS committee review the amended by-laws for a vote at a later date. Gomillion suggested a representative from Soil Conservation Services.

Discussion of new proposals submitted for inclusion on LMS priority list

Marsh said the county has four projects to be added to the LMS priority list.

1. Upgrade the County Auditorium to be a special needs and family shelter.

2. Build the Pace Gymnasium/Shelter

3. Build the Pace Community Center/Shelter

4. GIS Enhancements

Furman asked if the County Auditorium is structurally rated to be a shelter. Marsh said she felt a structural engineer should look at current government buildings and any future government buildings that will be used as a shelter.

Walker said the Pace Gymnasium will be an at risk shelter. He said the only at risk shelter the county has, that is not a school, is the Milton Community Center. Furman said in the distant future there should be shelter buildings all over the county including the south end for after hurricane events or other types of hazards. Marsh said the shelters can be used after the event as points of distribution and comfort stations. Walker said Bracewell, Emergency Management Director, will need to comprehensively assess all county assets to determine where upgrades are needed and the types of upgrades that are needed.

Ken Garner, Navarre Press, asked Bracewell when she expects to hire the additional planners. Walker said Ed Rodriguez, Deputy Director, and the Logistics Chief positions are staffed. Bracewell said the job descriptions are being developed for the Operations Chief and Planner Chief positions. Walker said the positions will be filled early in 2006. Bracewell said the county does need to have a special needs shelter and an alternate shelter identified. She said the new Avalon School will be completed in early 2007, and the School Board has agreed to designate this facility as a special needs shelter. Marsh said it is difficult to have the special needs shelter at a school. She said it will be good to have an alternate special needs shelter that is not dependent on school space.

D. Adams moved to add the four recommended projects to the LMS Priority List; Gomillion seconded, and the vote carried unanimously.

D. Adams said she felt it is redundant to have a Pace Gymnasium and a separate Pace Community Center in the same area.

Upcoming Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant

Marsh said the Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant is currently open. She said information is included in the packet if anyone is interested in applying. Marsh said the closing date is December 9, 2005, and there is an online application. She said she will apply for the PDM grant when enough sites are identified and all the data is collected.

Other Business & Public Comments

M. Adams said the Santa Rosa County Preparedness and Disaster Recovery Committee has been established. He said the LMS Task Force is specifically represented by Gomillion who is over the mitigation phase. M. Adams said the Santa Rosa County Preparedness and Disaster Recovery Committee will bridge the communication gap that sometimes exists within the county and act on behalf of the county with mitigation, recovery, response and preparedness. He said Gomillion will be the liaison between the two committees.

Next Meeting Date/Adjournment

The next scheduled meeting of the LMS Committee is Wednesday, February 15, 2006, at 1:30 p.m. in the Emergency Operations Center.

There being no further business to come before the LMS Committee at this time, the meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.